

### The school boards and systems

The day-to-day operation of schools is a local responsibility and is carried out by school boards made up of trustees elected by local ratepayers. One of the many functions of school boards is to ensure that provincial policies established by the Ministry of Education are implemented and adapted to local needs.

In Ontario, there are two publicly supported school systems, the "public" school system, and, as provided for in the British North America Act of 1867, a Roman Catholic "separate" school system. Public funds support "public" schools to the end of Grade 13, "separate" schools to the end of Grade 10.

### Private schools

Private schools in Ontario are supported solely by student fees and private donations from individuals, organizations, and firms. Many offer programs leading to the Secondary School Graduation Diploma and the Secondary School Honour Graduation Diploma. All schools granting diploma credits are inspected by the Ministry of Education.

### More information

Other pamphlets in this series tell more about education in Ontario. For copies, please write to or telephone:

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# INTRODUCTION TO EDUCATION IN ONTARIO



Ministry  
of  
Education  
Ontario  
Hon. Bette Stephenson, M.D. Minister  
Harry K. Fisher, Deputy Minister

## An introduction to education in Ontario

A good education is within reach of all Ontario residents. Free access to education up to the university and college level is the right of every child or adult in this province. College and university fees are kept as low as possible in order to accommodate all qualified students who want to continue their education. Post-secondary tuition fees, in fact, meet only fifteen per cent of operating costs.

Education is a way of life in Ontario, so much so that we sometimes take for granted the opportunities that are readily available to the citizens of Canada's most populous province. Of Ontario's more than 7.7 million residents over the age of five years, nearly 2.3 million are now attending school, college, or university full- or part-time; that's three people in every ten.

The Ontario government supports more than 4500 schools, 22 community colleges, 15 universities, Ryerson Polytechnical Institute, and the Ontario College of Art. These institutions employ about 110 000 full-time and many thousands of part-time teachers, instructors, and professors. In addition, the province supports four colleges of agricultural technology, the Toronto Institute of Medical Technology, and a number of nursing assistant schools. The very size and scope of this undertaking allows an impressive range of educational services to be tailored to local needs. Far from being a large, impersonal organization, Ontario's educational system derives its strength from its adaptability and responsiveness to a variety of needs and circumstances.

In many areas of the province, education is available in both official languages. Education is provided for handicapped children and adults. Many thousands of adults, past "traditional" school age, register every year in correspondence courses and special-interest courses at all levels: elementary and secondary school, college and university.

Responsibility for the educational network, and for the financing of it, is shared by the Ontario Ministry of Education, the 188 school boards located throughout the province, and the Ontario Ministry of Colleges and Universities. The two ministries are accountable to the citizens of Ontario through one minister who reports to the Ontario Legislature.

### The ministries

The Ontario Ministry of Education and the Ontario Ministry of Colleges and Universities are two of 22 Ontario government ministries. Together, however, they account for approximately one-third of the annual budget of the Ontario government.

The primary goal of the two ministries is to provide equal educational opportunities for all students in Ontario. In its contribution to programs, personnel, facilities, and resources, the government has the overall purpose of helping individual learners achieve their potential in physical, intellectual, emotional, social, cultural, and moral development. Accessibility to higher education is, of course, one of the primary social goals of the government.

The government's objectives in supporting the universities of Ontario are:

- to develop a more educated populace;
- to educate and train people for the professions;
- to provide opportunities for study at the highest intellectual level;
- to foster basic and applied research including development and evaluation;
- to provide services to the community (public lectures, concerts, theatre, art expositions, athletic events, legal clinics, health services, consulting advice to local business and industry, mediation of labour disputes, to name only a few).

In addition to the personal and practical benefits envisaged by the individual student, study at the university level helps students to develop personal judgement and self-discipline through independent research and study. Some university programs, of course, are directly job-related.

The government's objectives in supporting community colleges are:

- to provide courses of types and at levels not offered in the secondary schools;
- to meet the educational needs of secondary-school graduates who do not plan or wish to attend university;
- to meet the educational needs of adults and out-of-school youth, whether or not they are secondary school graduates.

Some of the objectives of the Manpower Training programs offered by colleges of applied arts and technology are:

- to provide the mechanisms for ensuring that the needs of business and industry for skilled and semi-skilled occupations are met;
- to encourage training within business and industry to complement skill training in public institutions.